

CASA OF PINAL COUNTY

CASA Updates December 2020

Ending 2020 with Gratitude



2020 is a year that will go down in history. Most of us are ready to bid it farewell without a second glance. There's no doubt that this has been a year of struggle, heartache and tragedy due to COVID.

It has affected every single one of us in some way. Some caught the virus and recovered. Others watched loved ones pass away. People lost their jobs. Students lost out on educational opportunities. Businesses closed their doors. The list goes on and on. And it's not over yet.

But for those who know me - I always look at life with the "glass is half full" attitude. In the midst of tragedy, communities met the challenge. People stepped up to help their neighbors. First responders and health care workers crossed the lines to keep us safe and care for those who

could not care for themselves. Schools creatively found ways to engage with students. Business owners did their best to provide essential services. Parents became home-schooled teachers. Strangers collected food, students put together care packages for the homeless and thousands of masks were handmade for those who needed them. Families spent valuable time together.

As the holidays make their way into our homes, let's end this year with visions of what was good and what was right in this world. Let us be thankful for those things we often take for granted. Make your list of what you are grateful for. Share it with those you care about. Own it. Believe it. You deserve it.

My 2020 Gratitude List may be different from yours and that's ok. Just remember to keep your glass half full and bring in this next year with positive thoughts, gratitude and kindness to others. Happy holidays!

Donna's top 10 gratitude list:

1. *Arizona sunsets.* Their beauty reminds me that I made it another day.
2. *Freedom.* I live in the best country in the world and will never take my rights for granted.
3. *Afternoon naps.* Curling up on the couch on a Sunday afternoon refreshes my soul.
4. *Conversations with my sons.* Our thought-provoking talks make me proud of who they are.
5. *Reading.* Nothing feels better than to hold a book in my hand and escape.
6. *Thunderstorms.* Rumbling sounds from the skies remind me there is something bigger than myself.
7. *Technology.* Contact with family and friends across the miles is essential to my happiness.
8. *Mistakes.* I make them. I own them. More importantly, they teach me valuable lessons.
9. *Child laughter.* Nothing quite makes the soul happy like the sounds of a child's innocent laugh.
10. *Marriage.* After 40 years together, Mike and I must be doing something right!

DON'T FORGET ABOUT THESE WEBINARS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES...

Jacob's Law Training

Arizona House Bill 2442 was passed into law in 2016, and helped to correct many issues facing foster, kinship and adopted children who receive behavioral health services. This training covers the following:

- Overview of Jacob's Law,
- Review and Use of the DCS Placement Packet,
- Legal Rights & Protections for Children and Resource Parents, and
- Covered Services.

Training length is 2 hours. Certificates available upon request. Click on one of the dates below to register for the training date that works best for you.

Friday December 11, 2020 - 5:00pm - 7:00pm

2020

FOSTER KINSHIP ADOPTIVE FORUMS

This is a recurring invite for the remainder of the 2020 forums which take place the 1st Tuesday of every month

[Join Meeting](#)

Password: 126461

Meeting URL:

<https://centene.zoom.us/j/96685020602?pwd=cWFleVFKM1A3N0lVWWVlL3ZaNDRIUT09>

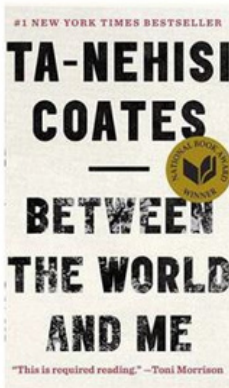
[Join by Telephone](#)

Dial: (646) 931- 3860 or (669) 444 - 9171

Meeting ID: 966 8502 0602

Password: 126461

National CASA/GAL Book Club: Diversity Equity and Inclusion Series



Over the summer National CASA/GAL launched a book club where staff and volunteers can engage in facilitated dialogue on a series of readings. Current events have caused us to reflect and find ways we can address racism, injustices, diversity, equity, engagement and inclusion. It is critical to the work we do to understand subjects that may ultimately impact the children we serve. With this in mind, the current book club series focuses on the subject of diversity, equity and inclusion.

We invite you to join us for the third book in the series: "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation's history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of "race," a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black

women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. A story woven from personal narrative, reimagined history, and fresh, emotionally charged reportage, "Between the World and Me" clearly illuminates the past, bravely confronts our present, and offers a transcendent vision for a way forward.

Join us! Independent reading and group discussion are from Jan. 11 – Feb. 19, with the author discussion scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 23 from 2 – 3 p.m. EST.

[Sign Up Today](#)

DON'T FORGET

If you have attended, or are planning to attend, any of the trainings and webinars shown in the updates, make sure to log the time in your dashboard so your coordinator will know you've put in the time!

Our American States | An NCSL Podcast



State, Federal Policies Aim to Ease Transition Out of Foster Care | OAS Episode 108

▶ 0:00 / 26:19 — 🔊 ⋮

Today's podcast is focused on foster care and specifically on the challenges faced by young people as they transition out of the foster care system.

Our guests are Levi Smith Jr., a 23-year-old senior at Georgia State University studying social work. Levi spent 10 years in foster care and discusses the challenges faced by older youth as they transition out of that system. Our second guest is Georgia Rep. Katie Dempsey (R), who has been involved with various pieces of legislation affecting youth in foster care during her 13 years in the legislature.

In the second segment of the show, I talk with Lynn Johnson, who is the assistant secretary overseeing the Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Johnson discusses the federal government's role in aiding states as they work with young people transitioning out of foster care.



Working With Children Using a Trauma Informed Lens: 4 Strategies You Can't Live Without

Tuesday January 26, 2021

3:00pm-5:00pm

Please join Arizona Complete Health-Complete Care Plan as we host Robin Blumenthal, Education Domain Director for 4 Tucson and training coordinator with Southern Arizona Trauma Informed Network for this amazing training.

This training will be an overview of trauma and how trauma effects learning and brain development as well as cover 5 effective Love and Logic® strategies for working with children through a trauma-informed lens.

Where:

- **Zoom**-The Zoom link will be sent to you 1-2 days prior to the training.

Who is this training for?

- Foster/Kinship Caregivers, Adoptive Parents, Child Welfare agency staff, CASAs, behavioral health staff, DCS workers, social workers, in home specialists, therapists, counseling staff, and anyone else who supports Foster/kinship caregivers and adoptive parents!

If you are interested in attending, please [RSVP via Entrbrite Here](#)

About the Trainer: Robin and her husband, Roger, have been married 29 years and have 6 daughters who call them mom and dad, including 4 biological, 1 adopted and 1 unofficially adopted, ranging in age from 16-34. She serves as the Education Domain Director for 4Tucson, where her focus is connecting schools to the community, as well as trauma-informed trainings for the community. She is a certified trainer with the ACEs Consortium and an Independent Facilitator of the Love and Logic® Curriculum (having taught well over 3,500 parents and educators these amazing tools.) She has a B.S. in Child Development and an M.A. in Human Resource Leadership.

Robin is a trainer, speaker, event organizer, and a new author - having just finished her first book – “Where in the Zoo Are You?” - A children’s book with resources to help children talk about their emotions concerning traumatic events like COVID-19.

*Training certificates are available upon request

If you have any questions, please contact Jenifer Kent at Arizona Complete Health: jekent@azcompletehealth.com

FIRST THINGS FIRST



2020 Gift Guide: The best toys and gifts for young children

The holiday season is here, and while it may be different for many families this year, the search for the perfect gift for your little one goes on. Our interactive guide to the best gifts for young kids offers low-cost recommendations for babies, toddlers and preschoolers. Many are free, including the best gift of all: quality time spent playing, talking and reading with you.

[Learn more](#)

Favorite Children's Books

Books always make a great gift for your baby, toddler or preschooler. Better yet — get them their own library card! Sharing books is an important way to help them develop language skills, learn new words and grow to love reading. It's also great bonding time. Look for your favorite among these recommendations from Arizonans who know the power of children's books and reading.

[Read more](#)

COVID-19 Resources for Families

Young children are especially sensitive to situations causing stress in their world and in their parents and caregivers. And these are stressful times. Find important resources to help support your family during the coronavirus crisis, including essential services, parenting information, self care and learning at home.

[Find resources](#)

Parenting Content: Best of 2020

- [What to Expect at Your Child's Age and Stage of Development](#)
- [A Message for Moms](#)
- [Dear Dads: You're Doing Fine](#)
- [Parenting in the Time of Coronavirus and Social Distancing](#)
- [5 Things Grandparents Do for Young Children](#)
- [Top 5 Tips for Video Chat with Young Children](#)
- [Doctors Urge Parents to Keep Up with Check Ups and Immunizations](#)
- [FLIP IT: 4 Steps to Transforming Challenging Behavior](#)

PINAL COUNTY LIBRARIES PRESENT

Chicka Chicka Zoom Zoom

Your favorite Pinal County Children's Librarians are coming together through Zoom to bring your little ones an online event filled with songs, crafts, and of course...stories!

To register for the event please visit:
Tuesday, December 15
10:00 a.m & 4:00 p.m.

Morning Session
<https://bit.ly/chickazoomAM>

Afternoon Session
<https://bit.ly/chickazoomPM>


Starring

- Apache Junction Public Library
- Coolidge Public Library
- City of Maricopa Public Library
- Kearny Public Library
- Superior Public Library

Craft bags will be available starting Monday, November 30.

To pick up craft supplies please contact participating libraries, or contact Michele Reimer with First Things First at (480) 253-1456 or mreimer@FirstThingsFirst.org

SUPPORTED BY
FIRST THINGS FIRST




It is important to always keep your **contact information** updated in your Dashboard so that our office and, most importantly, your coordinator always has the correct phone # and address for you!



Here are the upcoming scheduled **Peer Support Group** meetings for **December**:

12/14 - 9am-10am

If you want to participate in any of the PSGs above, **be sure to let us know by sending an RSVP** to Jodi at jwheeler@courts.az.gov and be on the look out for the Zoom meeting invitation. We can't wait to see your smiling faces! Stay safe - stay healthy!

★ Gift Card Drive! ★

FOR THOSE IN EXTENDED FOSTER CARE

This holiday season we are collecting gift cards to be donated to young adults in extended foster care in Arizona. While the holidays this year may be looking different for many of us, we want to show those ages 18-21 who remain in voluntary care a special kind of support that we believe will be very much appreciated.

Many young adults who remain in extended foster care are working hard to create futures that they have dreamt of while being children in the Arizona foster care system. These young adults may be struggling to have many of the comforting things this time of year. Family support, plentiful meals, financial means may not be readily available to these young adults, but as a community we can come together to provide a little more comfort and cheer this time of the year.

We are graciously asking for the support of the great community we all live and serve in, to help us in this effort to make the holiday season shine a little brighter for these special young adults. Please consider donating gift cards to grocery stores, fast food, restaurants, clothing stores for adults/children, department stores., etc..

All donations need to be collected by Thursday, December 17th to ensure they can be received by the holiday. Please contact **Stephanie Lewis-Smale** at 520-866-4425 or slewis-smale@courts.az.gov to make arrangements or for any questions.





TRAINING SUPERSTARS!

These CASAs took the annual 12 hours of training requirement to a whole other level!

Deb Hoopengartner - 70.83 hours

Sande Hamberg - 69.25

Hilario Pulido - 51

Pat Wheeler - 48.55

Paula Gibson - 42.5

30+ hours:

Linda Morris-Levan - 37.75

Beth Chism - 36.3

Twila Perucci - 36

Sue Ruohomaki - 32.25

Rowe Harting - 31.25

Shannon Eason - 30

Bobbi Seabolt - 30

20+ hours:

Marian Feeney - 26

Barbie Marley - 25.76

Anne Lewis - 24

Dana Johanson - 22

Michelle Jones - 20

CASAs with more than 12 hours:

Mary Gallas - 19.5

Jane Pickens - 19

Karen Malek - 17.75

Aisha Malone - 17.5

Roy Ruohomaki - 17.25

Keith Eason - 17

Katie Trast - 17

Georgene Carruthers - 16

Deb Cunningham - 16

Cathy Bednarz - 15.5

Cindy Johnson - 15.5

Al Luther - 15

Cathy Reid - 14.85

Stephanie Schmutzler - 14

Alice Estes - 14

Heather Atwood - 13.75

Victoria Obergfoll - 13.5

Kathy Musick - 12.5

Helena Herceg - 12.1

DECEMBER

Welcome
NEW CASAs!

Morgan Butters
Geoffrey Hillermann

HAPPY

Sue Osowski - 8th
Stephanie Schmutzler - 21st

BIRTHDAY!

It's your CASA-versary!

Ann Dessert - 16 years

Sue Mobley - 4 years

Cathy Bednarz - 3 years

Deborah Hoopengartner - 2 years

Linda Morris-Levan - 2 years

Happy Holidays!